302 [245] The Caribs plant bichet trees near their houses, for otherwise the birds would spoil them. They make urucu from the fruit of this tree. It produces its fruit in bunches, the fruit looking like the stone of a peach although it is not so hard. They boil it in water and when the water is tepid they rub this fruit between their hands in the water. The paint falls to the bottom and makes a layer like wax. They mix it with powder from charred sandle wood, because otherwise its brilliance would hurt their eyes. Then they add oil to the mixture, and redden themselves often with it. This is their best shirt. This paint fills their pores, prevents seawater from drying on their body, and also repels the mosquitos and kills chiggers. [79] They crush urucu on a flat stone in the same way our painters use a marble slab. They mix it with oil and make a mask on their face as thick as a 30 sous coin, when they go to a drinking party. [240] When a man plans to go to a feast he will stand up and his wife draws curves and lines from the shoulders down to the buttocks. She covers the back, arms, and chest with fanciful designs which are not unpleasant to look at. However, I have more admired the man's patience than the painting itself, for the man sometimes remains standing for twelve hours. [231] Women also draw designs on hammocks and calabashes, but our painters would be likely to question calling these women artists. [89] There is a soot produced by elemi gum being burned under a large pot or some other earthenware vessel. They brush the soot off with a feather. This is the most beautiful black it is possible to find. Boys and girls keep some of it in small calabashes in order to paint themselves with it when they go to feasts. After they have washed well and wiped their faces they dip a small brush in it and draw very delicate lines above their eyelashes and along their eyelids. Others draw Spanish mustaches which they draw twisted on their cheeks in an infinity of scrolls. They also draw a thousand other sketches to prevent their recognition by anyone [414] they meet. They have a special mirror in front of their eyes in order to draw a more amusing and grotesque design. [174] One could scarcely find a Carib who did not have a small mirror for use when he ornaments himself before a feast, and also for use in discovering and pressing the small pimples which come to their faces. [286]

The young girls and boys have a lock of hair on their foreheads. This is cut straight across. Men and women have their forehead and [304] the front part of their head flattened in order to make it more beautiful. If they chanced to be sick in their infancy at the time their head was soft and it could not be shaped in this way, they are supposed to be ugly.